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ABSTRACT

Native American languages have no equivalent for the word "art." Yet the objects Native Americans have used and still use suggest that they are a highly spiritual people who create objects of extraordinary beauty. In Native American thought, there is no distinction between what is beautiful or functional, and what is sacred or secular. Design goes far beyond concerns of function, and beauty is much more than simple appearances. Some Native American artists continue traditions of their ancestors, while others transform those traditions in new and innovative ways. This packet on the arts of Native Americans provides an overview of the history and culture of Native Americans. The packet presents information about the Native Americans of the Mississippi Valley and their arts. It discusses the arts of the Native Americans of the Northeast Woodlands. The packet introduces the Native Americans of the Northwest and their art, followed with information about the Plains Indians and their arts. The packet concludes with information on the Southwest Indians and their arts. Each section of the packet provides many colorful, detailed illustrations and explanations of Indian artifacts and crafts. Contains a glossary and lists tribal Web sites. (BT)

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SURROUNDED BY BEAUTY

Arts of Native America

SO 035 403

Minneapolis Institute of Arts
2400 Third Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404

2002

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History & Culture

Beauty before me, I walk with.
Beauty behind me, I walk with.
Beauty above me, I walk with.
Beauty below me, I walk with.
Beauty all around me, I walk with.
Navajo Night Chant

The Art of Daily Life

There is no equivalent in the many Native American languages for the word *art*. Yet the objects here suggest that Native Americans are a highly spiritual people who create objects of extraordinary beauty. In Native American thought there is also no distinction between what is beautiful or functional, and what is sacred or secular. Design goes far beyond concerns of function, and beauty is much more than simple appearances. For many native peoples, beauty arises from living in harmony with the order of the universe.The concerns and aspirations of a vital contemporary American Indian population changes as the world changes. Today some Native American artists continue traditions of their ancestors, while others transform those traditions in new and innovative ways.

An Introduction to Native American History and Culture

A Living Culture

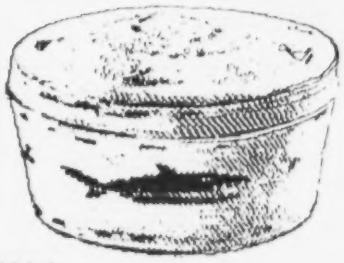
Think not of indigenous cultures and nations all dead and gone from this sacred land. The physical world is not at all silent or what it seems. The nations live! My spirit lives! The spiritual world is everywhere!. If you listen, you will hear. There are so many ancient voices shouting from this sacred land. In the distance, I hear one of a thousand songs of an ancient spiritual man...

- Anna Lee Walters, Pawnee and Otoe-Missouria

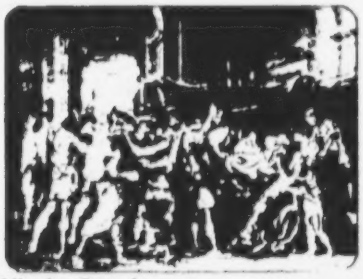
American Indians are not extinct people. Their cultures have a past and present and a future. Generalizations about Native people contribute to stereotypic notions that make no allowance for individuality or for any possibility of change over time. Native American objects reflect aspects of cultures that should be ascribed only to the people who produced them and to the particular time in which the objects were made. In doing so, we respect the diversity of Native people and acknowledge that their cultures, like all others, and are not fixed in time.

Ideas about Art

In the past, Native Americans did not create art for its own sake. The form and decoration of handmade objects evolved out of daily needs and spiritual beliefs over thousands of years. Art, beauty, and spirituality are so intertwined in the daily life of traditional Native Americans that it is nearly impossible to speak of them separately.



Makah
Northwest Coast region (United States)
Basket, 20th century
Grass
Gift of Stanley H. Brackett 75.13.2



Nicolas Poussin
The Death of Germanicus, 1627
oil on canvas
The William Hood Dunwoody Fund,
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 58.28

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Art in Western European tradition developed in a very different way. Paintings were the most esteemed form of fine art, with history painting considered the most important of painting types. European utilitarian objects were considered craft rather than fine art.

Spirituality

Many Native American people traditionally believe in a spiritual realm that exists beyond the tangible world. Access to this spiritual world is gained through dreams, visions, and ceremonies. Many Native people also believe in a single creative force. The name for this spiritual force varies from one group to another: it is called orenda (Or-END-a) by the Iroquois, manitou (MAN-e-too) by the Algonquin, and wakan (wah-KON) by the Lakota.

Historically, Native Americans' lives were shaped by their spiritual beliefs. Most Native people believed that they were connected to every other element of creation. Each animal, tree, or rock had its own spirit through which an individual could establish contact with the spirit world. The survival and well-being of Native people was dependent on maintaining harmony with the earth. Many contemporary Native people continue to hold these traditional beliefs.

Warfare

Although American Indian people engaged in warfare before European contact, as well as later in defense of their homelands, the image of the Native people as savage warriors has been grossly exaggerated. Native people who did engage in warfare were no more or less savage than other societies of the period. Although scalping has often been associated with Indian warfare, Europeans may have introduced it on this continent. Europeans certainly encouraged scalping, supplying metal scalping knives to replace flint or horn tools and offering bounties in the 18th century for the scalps of Indian men, women and children.

North American Indians did not have armies, but some Native cultures had military societies. Many Native people engaged in sporadic warfare with their neighbors for purposes of self-protection or acquiring resources, for revenge, but mainly for honor. In many societies, a man gained honor in battle. For example, among the Plains people, counting coup (to touch a living enemy and escape unharmed) was a more honorable act than to kill an enemy.

Oral Tradition

Most Native Americans passed their history and traditions from one generation to the next through the spoken word. Largely unknown to many non-Indians, the stories of American Indians are as rich as the mythology of the ancient Greeks. They explain the nature of creation and the universe, serve as a model of human behavior, and transmit history and tradition. Storytellers who were usually older members of the community, often grandparents, handed down these stories. In some instances, the stories are an integral part of works of art, communicating visually the rich cultural heritage of Native American people.

History

Too often in the past the history of America has been written as if it began with the arrival of the Europeans. This attitude excludes the long heritage of Native people who have lived in North America for tens of thousands of years (to traditional people, since the "beginning of time"). Five hundred years ago at the point of initial contact with Europeans millions of culturally diverse people speaking hundreds of different languages populated North America. The environments in which they lived shaped their lifestyles. Depending on the resources available to them, some were farmers or gatherers, others fished and hunted. Many tribes lived in one place most of the time, while others were nomadic hunters following the migratory patterns of large game animals, such as buffalo.

These different economies gave rise to diverse cultural characteristics and complex social, political, and economic systems. In the northeast Woodlands region, six nations formed the Iroquois Confederacy, aspects of which served as a model for the makers of the U.S. Constitution. Highly complex agricultural societies existed in the Southwest and Midwest for centuries prior to the arrival of the Europeans. In the Southwest, Native people developed irrigation systems that exist today, some still in use. Vast trade routes distributed everything from shells to fabric among the many cultures that populated the North American continent.

Why "Indians"?

Despite the five centuries that have elapsed since Native people and early explorers came into contact, the history and culture of Native people remains unknown or misunderstood by many non-Indian people. The misunderstanding began early. Christopher Columbus set out to explore Japan, Korea, China, and India, which were collectively referred to at the time as the East Indies. Believing that he had arrived in the Indies when he reached the lands of the New World, Columbus mistakenly called the Native people "Indians". This term has prevailed into the 20th century. Today, most North American Natives prefer to be called Native American or American Indian, although the majority of Native people originally referred to themselves in their own languages by words meaning "the people." For example the Ojibwe people, often referred to as Chippewa by non-Indians, call themselves "Anishinabe" which is the Ojibwe word for "the people."

Spanish Exploration

During the first half of the 16th century, several Spanish expeditions explored regions of the continent to the north of present-day Mexico. The earliest documented encounter with Native people occurred in 1513 when Ponce de Leon, who colonized Puerto Rico, sailed north to the peninsula that is now Florida. As a preemptive strike against the French who were exploring to the north, the Spanish made several attempts at colonization. They established the first settlement of St. Augustine in what is now Florida in 1565. In what is today New Mexico, a large group of settlers drove out the Pueblo people in 1598 to establish a Spanish colony. By 1610, the Spanish established their capital in Santa Fe, which they maintained until 1680 when the pueblo people revolted and in turn, drove the Spanish out. Fourteen years later the Spanish regained control.

Maya Mask of a Spanish Conquistador
19th century
wood, pigment
The Paul C. Johnson, Jr. Fund, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 99.3.2

French Exploration

At the same time that the Spanish were exploring the southern regions of the continent, the French established themselves in the Northeast, capitalizing on the abundant variety of fish, and establishing a lucrative fur trade with Native people of the Woodlands area. The French reached the Great Lakes by 1623. During the early 1700s, they pushed south from their settlements in Canada to the interior of the continent. Even though this land had been home to Native people for thousands of years, the French were able to establish dominion in the area from Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico, which they named Louisiana after their king, Louis XIV.

The English and the Dutch

Along the Atlantic seaboard, the English and the Dutch joined in competition for the land of the New World. Before the end of the 16th century, the English had attempted to establish colonies on Roanoke Island off the coast of North Carolina. The first permanent English settlement was to the north at Jamestown, Virginia in 1607. Two years later, the Dutch founded the colony of New Amsterdam (today's New York). It was here that the infamous trade occurred in which the Dutch acquired

Manhattan Island for goods that were valued at $24 at that time. By the time the pilgrims settled at Plymouth Colony (Massachusetts) in 1620, the Native people held deep resentments against white settlers. Despite these hard feelings, Samoset, a Pemaquid chief, greeted the colonists in English and gave assistance to the newcomers. In 1625, the first deed transferring land from the American Indians to the Europeans was recorded. Samoset did not consider deeds important, unable to foresee the consequences of the European idea of exclusive land rights. Samoset, like other Native people, believed that the land belonged to everyone.

The Impact of Europeans

The three centuries that followed the early exploration and settlement of North America by Europeans witnessed the transformation of American Indians from free people who populated the entire continent to a vastly reduced numbers confined to reservations. In the beginning European colonists often reported encounters with Native people who were friendly and helpful to them. But Native people stood in the way of what colonists wanted. The motivation of European-Americans, which was the acquisition of land, was always in direct opposition to the desire of the Native people to live lightly on the earth in accordance with their own traditions. In many instances Native people were simply crowded out of their lands. When it was necessary to forcibly remove them, they were forcibly removed. Some Native people were used as unpaid laborers while others were kidnapped and sold into the slave trade. European diseases, for which Native people had no immunity, wiped out entire populations in many areas. By the middle of the 19th century, the Native population was reduced by one-half to two-thirds its size two hundred years earlier.

The United States

In 1776, the newly formed United States of America joined in the competition for land. Even though the U.S. government theoretically protected the rights of the Indians to their homelands, Indian people were coerced into signing treaties that relinquished their titles to lands. In response to pressure from settlers for additional land, Congress passed the Removal Bill in 1830, giving President Andrew Jackson the power to exchange land west of the Mississippi River for Indian homelands in the Southeast. The western land was loosely described as "an ample district west of the Mississippi, not within the states of Missouri and Louisiana or the territory of Arkansas." Those Indian people who voluntarily agree to the exchange were relocated in an area of present-day Oklahoma. Those who refused were forcibly removed. The Native people were to be guaranteed rights to the new land forever in exchange for their homelands.

The Regulation Act of 1834 prohibited non-Indians from settling in Indian lands and required them to have license to trade with Native Americans, but waves of white settlers continued to move west across the Mississippi River anyway. Once territories were established in Iowa and Wisconsin, it became necessary to move the Indian "frontier" from the Mississippi River to the 95th meridian. The new line extended from the Lake of the Woods near the Minnesota-Canada border, south through Minnesota and Iowa, along the western border of Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana into Texas. Military forts like Fort Snelling were established to maintain this frontier. (In 1858, Minnesota was made a state. It extended west of the 95th meridian, 100 miles beyond the "permanent frontier" of the American Indians.)

The Conquest of the West

The discovery of gold in California in 1848 precipitated another wave of migration along the Santa Fe and Oregon trails. Settlers and miners overran Indian lands, obliterating their villages. Through a combination of disease and genocide, an estimated 70,000 Native people died in the west in the decade between 1849 and 1859.

By the outbreak of the Civil War, thirty million Euro-Americans populated the country to the east of the Mississippi and along the West Coast. A sizeable population of Africans brought into this country as a result of the slave trade also lived to the east. Although the war had temporarily slowed the movement of settlers from the east to the west, it was renewed with even greater force at the war's end. The decades from 1860 to 1890 that gave rise to the legends of the Wild West-of cowboys, range wars, cattle drives, and homesteaders-were sadly the same time in which the American Indian people faced the final conquest of their lands.

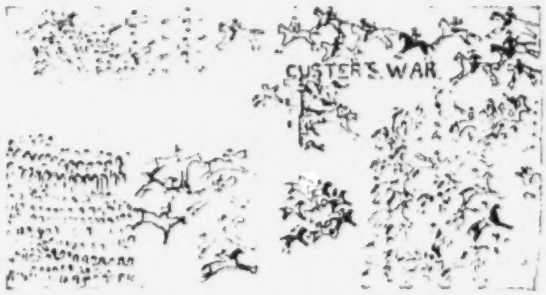
The Establishment of Reservations

During the last half of the 19th century, hundreds of battles were waged on the plains and to the west. Lives of both American Indians and Euro-Americans were lost, families were displaced, and treaties were made and broken. In the view of the government, the ultimate solution in the West, as had already occurred in the East, was to confine the Indians to reservations. Reservations are areas of usually very poor lands with specific boundaries, to which specific tribes were assigned to live. The assignments were made with little sensitivity. Tribes that were traditional enemies were sometimes placed together on a single reservation.

In an attempt to control the Plains Indians, the U.S. government encouraged the slaughter of the wild buffalo, the primary food source of the Native people. Once exterminated, the government believed that the Indians would have no choice but to willingly move on the reservations where they would receive food rations. Eventually, that assumption proved to be correct, but not before the Plains people waged a valiant fight.

The Final Battles

In a treaty negotiated in 1868 with Red Cloud, the chief of the Oglala Lakota band, the government recognized the Black Hills in South Dakota as part of the Sioux reservation. Because gold deposits were found there, the government unsuccessfully attempted to purchase the land from the Indians. The Black Hills was a sacred place to the Lakota people. The struggle for the Black Hills culminated in 1876 at the Battle of Little Bighorn where the combined forces of several Sioux tribes defeated General George Custer and the U.S. Army's 7th Cavalry. Although the Lakota won, the Army pursued them relentlessly, and ultimately their ability to resist was diminished by the extermination of the buffalo. The last Sioux bands were confined to reservations in 1878.



One Bull; Hunkpapa Lakota, Custer's War, about 1900, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, The Christina N. and Swan J. Turnblad Memorial Fund, 94.47.1

Euro-American & Native American military historians still discuss the Battle of Little Big Horn, but accounts through Indian eyes are relatively rare. One Bull fought in the 1876 battle & later painted this comprehensive view of events.

The Ghost Dance, which spread to the Plains from Nevada, prophesied the return of the buffalo and the disappearance of the white people. The Ghost Dance movement was viewed by many Native people as a "last chance" for the return of their old way of life, but the U.S. government viewed the movement as another threat. In the final episode of Indian wars, the U.S. Cavalry massacred defenseless men, women, and children of a starving Sioux band at Wounded Knee, South Dakota - an act that was rewarded by Congressional Medals of Honor for the Cavalry soldiers. The dispute over the Black Hills did not, however, end at Wounded Knee. Currently it is being fought in the courts rather than on the battlefield.

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Acculturation
The U.S. government attempted to, force the Native people on the reservation to accept the cultural practices of the Euro-Americans. However, many reservations created after the Civil War were little more than prison camps. The reservation lands were often unproductive and rations given to people were inadequate, so many died of starvation and disease. Some reservations required that Indians apply for permits to leave the reservation. To discourage Native people from retaining their own cultures, reservation officials denied them the right to speak their own languages or to practice their most sacred ceremonies. Native American children were often taken from their families and placed in boarding schools against their parents' wishes. Once removed from their own traditions, the children were more likely to become assimilated into white culture.

Allotment of Land
Government policy towards Indian land changed from tribal ownership of reservation land to individual ownership of lots of land with the passage of the Dawes Allotment Act in 1887. The Act was implemented to give each American Indian a plot of land with the intention of teaching them to farm and hasten assimilation of Native people into the Euro-American culture. In order for the individual allotments to be made, Native people had to surrender their reservation lands to the government. After the government allotted 169 acres to each adult and 80 acres to each child, the rest of the reservation land was offered for sale to non-Indians. Of the 138 million acres of land in Indian possession at the onset of the Dawes Act, only 48 million acres remained in Indian hands by 1932. Today, only 2 percent of the land of the 48 contiguous states belong to American Indians. The people of the Red Lake Reservation in Minnesota take great pride in the fact that they never surrendered their land for allotment. Today their reservation is among the few lands in America never owned by Euro-Americans.

Native Americans Today
The history of the Native American people is a story of loss, but more than that, it is a story of resilient strength, and continuity. Despite tremendous obstacles, Native Americans have survived. Although their population was decimated, they have recovered. In 1917, for the first time since the arrival of Europeans on this continent, more Native Americans were born than died. Today approximately 2,500,000 Native Americans live in the United States. And, the world they live in is changing. Native Americans are renewing their own pride in their traditions. Education has enabled the Native people to benefit themselves and to accomplish much in the outside world. Today, many American Indian people regard themselves as nations within a nation, governed by their own tribal governments. They have hope for the future.

Tribal Web Sites
Tribal names & their meanings: http://members.tripod.com/~PHILKON/names.html
Kwakiutl web site: http://www.umista.org/main/
Haida (and Tlingit) web site: http://www.tlingit-haida.org/
Makah web site: http://www.makah.com/
Comanche web site: http://www.comanchenation.com/
Iroquois web site: http://www.sixnations.org/
Pawnee web site: http://www.pawneenation.org/
Navajo web site: http://www.navajo.org/
Hopi web site: http://www.hopi.nsn.us/

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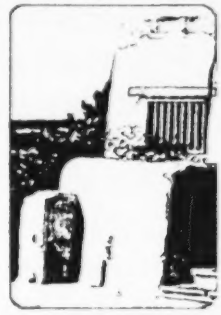
Glossary

George Morrison, Anishinabe (Ojibwe) 1919-2000
Woodlands region (United States)
Collage IX: Landscape, 1974
Wood
The Frances E. Andrews Fund 75.24

abstract
used to describe a composition based on forms existing in nature that are reduced or simplified and may no longer be recognizable. Morrison's collage is an abstract landscape.

acculturation
a process that is intended to condition a person of one culture to the ways of another culture.

adobe
sun-dried clay brick used for dwellings in the Southwest

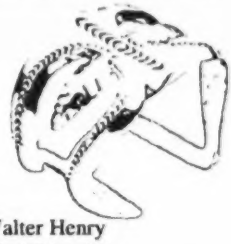


An Adobe Building

Anishinabe
means "first people." The term refers to the native people of the central and northern Great Lakes areas. They are the same people who are today known as Ojibwe and Chippewa.

assimilation
the cultural absorption of a minority group into the dominant culture

balance
an equal distribution of weight. Symmetry is the term used to describe balance when the same elements exist on either side of a central axis. The Navajo bracelet is symmetrical. Asymmetrical balance occurs when unlike elements having equal weight are placed opposite each other. The upper section of the bandolier bag is asymmetrical. The lower portion is symmetrical.

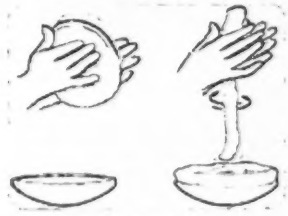


Walter Henry
Diné (Navajo)
Southwest region (United States)
Bracelet, about 1935
Silver
Bequest of Virginia Doneghy, 90.58.77

Anishinabe (Ojibwe)
Woodlands region (United States)
Bandolier Bag, early 20th century
Beadwork on muslin and black velvet, wool yarn
Bequest of Dorothy Record Bauman 74.63.8

Chippewa
variant of the name Ojibwe. Today, it is used interchangeably with Ojibwe by many people.

coiling technique
a method of forming pottery by hand. A coil or rope of clay is wound around in successive layers and pinched together to form the walls. Baskets are also made by coiling, using plant materials.



Coiling Technique

collage
a work of art that has been made by gluing materials to a surface. The term comes from the French word meaning "paste.

Dakota
the eastern branch of the people often referred to as Sioux. Dakota means "friend" and is also the name given to the people's language.

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Dine
the original name of the Navajo. The term means "the people."

diversity
the quality of being different; of great variety

firing
the process of heating ceramic pottery to a high temperature to harden it.

geometric shape
a regular shape such as a square, rectangle, circle, or triangle. The opposite is an organic shape, which resembles curving forms in nature. The bandolier bag has both geometric and organic shapes.

Anishinabe (Ojibwe)
Woodlands region (United States)
Bandolier Bag, early 20th century
Beadwork on muslin and black velvet, wool yarn
Bequest of Dorothy Record Bauman 74.63.8

Haida
tribe of the Northwest Coast Indians

hozho
the Navajo concept of beauty

Lakota
the western branch of the Plains people frequently referred to as Sioux.

maize
a crop cultivated by Native Americans. Modern corn is a kind of maize.

Mound Builders
The name given by archaeologists to the native people who constructed earthen mounds along the Mississippi River.

nation
a group of people connected by lineage or language.

Navajo
native people who migrated from northwestern Canada and settled in the Southwest around 1400. They call themselves Dine.

nomad
a person who moves around rather than living in a permanent location.

Nootka
Northwest Coast native people who resided in the Vancouver Island area.

Northwest Coast people
those native people who lived in the area along the Pacific Coast from Alaska to northern California. Some of the Northwest Coast tribes include the Haida, Nootka, Tlingit, and Bella Bella.

Oglala
band of the Lakota tribe.

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Ojibwe
another name for the Anishinabe people who lived in the Great Lakes region. Many Ojibwe people live in Minnesota today.

Pictograph
a pictorial image that has a specific meaning. Pictographs constituted a type of written communication for many native people.

Pima
native people who live along the rivers of southern Arizona.

One Bull
Hunkpapa Lakota
Custer's War, about 1900
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, The Christina N. and Swan J. Turnblad Memorial Fund, 94.47.1

Plains people
many different groups of native people who lived between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains from the provinces of Canada to Texas. Some of the Plains tribes include the Pawnee, Commanche, Kiowa, Dakota, and Lakota.

potlatch
an elaborate ceremony of the Northwest Coast people held to celebrate an event. At this ceremony, the host gives away large quantities of material possessions.

Pima Ceremonial Ki, photo by E. Curtis, on ArtsConnectEd

pueblo
a type of multi-unit adobe dwelling built by Southwest native people. Pueblo is a Spanish word meaning "town" that was also applied to the people who lived in these dwellings.

reservation
land with specific boundaries to which native people were assigned by the U.S. government.

Seneca
Woodlands people who lived in the area of present day New York state.

Shoshone
native people of the Great Basin. Today, many Shoshone people live on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming.

Sioux
a group of Northern Plains people. Their name is a corruption of an Anishinabe word meaning "snake like" or "enemy." Their original name is Dakota, which means "friend."

Southwest people
those native people who live in the southern area of Utah and Colorado and throughout New Mexico and Arizona. Examples of So uthwestern tribes include the Navajo, Pima, Hopi, and Zuni.

Stereotype
a fixed idea about a person or group of persons held by a number of people. A stereotype does not allow for individuality and is often based on misconceptions. For example, many people believe that all Native Americans rode horses, hunted buffalo, and wore feather headdresses.

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Sun Dance
the most sacred ceremony of the Plains people.

tribe
a term used by both Indians and non Indians to refer to groups of Native Americans sharing a common linguistic and cultural heritage. Some Native Americans prefer to speak not of "tribe" but of "nation.

two-dimensional
used to describe an object that has only height and width. The elkhide is two-dimensional.

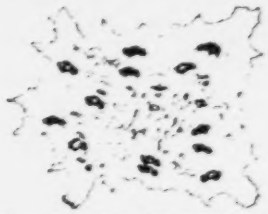
utilitarian
pertaining to an object that is functional, made for a specific use

Wakan-tanka
in the Lakota language means "the Great Mystery." The name refers to the creator of the earth.

wigwam
a Woodlands dwelling made of saplings and bark or hide

Woodlands people
the many native people who occupied a vast region of forested area from the Atlantic seaboard to the Mississippi River. Examples include the Ojibwe, Seneca, and Iroquois.

Zuni
Pueblo people of New Mexico.



Attributed to Cadzi Cody, Wind River Shoshone
Great Plains region (United States)
Wyoming, Wind River Reservation
Scenes of Plains Indian Life, about 1900
Elk hide with pigment
Gift of Bruce Dayton, 85.92

Seneca
Woodlands region (United States)
Feast ladle, 19th century
Wood
The Christina N. and Swan J. Turnblad Memorial Fund 89.89.2

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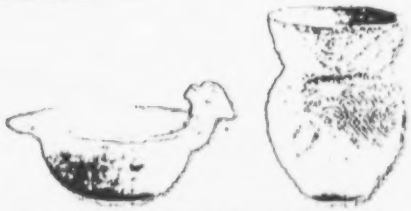
Mississippi Valley Introduction



Effigy Bowl & Caddo Jar

Long before European explorers and traders came to North America, a succession of native societies flourished on the continent. We know little about them other than what archaeology has unearthed. Hunting and gathering societies existed in the Southeast as early as 12,000 B.C. Agriculture was developed later. Maize was grown in the Southwest during the first millennium B.C. By the fifth century A.D., a variety of corn known as hard flint maize spread across the Plains into the Mississippi Valley. Corn became a staple and was intensively cultivated throughout the Midwest and eastern Woodlands after A.D. 800.

The cultivation of corn in the flood plains of the Mississippi River Valley made possible the development of a civilization that stretched west to Oklahoma, southeast to the Gulf, and northward into Wisconsin. Later, another staple crop was added. Beans, first introduced to the Mississippi Valley around A.D. 1000, were in common usage by A.D. 1200. The two crops helped to foster densely populated centers out of which grew complex political and social organizations and far-reaching trade networks.

Cities of the Mound Builders

Huge earthen mounds positioned around a plaza characterized the cities that flourished along the Mississippi River and its tributaries. On top of the mounds were temples and homes of nobility. Commoners lived in thatched dwellings at ground level. The whole complex was surrounded by wooden fortifications and outside the city grew fields of corn. Although no one knows what the native people called themselves, archaeologists refer to them as the Mound Builders. The largest of the mounds is near present East St. Louis in Illinois with a base of 200,000 square feet, larger than the pyramids of Egypt. Hundreds of smaller mounds exist, the northernmost of which is near Red Wing, Minnesota.

Artistic Production

Excavations of the various mounds have produced a storehouse of treasures made of clay, shell, marble, and copper. Each region is noted for a particular style of production. For example, sites in and around modern-day Arkansas produced elaborate pottery used in burials as well as many other art objects.

Clay Vessels, Caddo
Mississippi Valley (United States)
Arkansas or Oklahoma
Bowl & Vessel, 1250-1500
Ceramic
The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund, 90.2.7 and 90.2.3

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Contact

When Spanish explorers came north from present-day Mexico during the 16th century, they encountered the Mound Builders of the Mississippi Valley. Unfortunately, the native people were unable to survive the epidemic disease that followed and ultimately decimated the population. Only the Natchez people survived and continued to build mounds along the lower Mississippi River into the 17th century.

Maya Mask of a Spanish Conquistador
19th century
wood, pigment
The Paul C. Johnson, Jr. Fund, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 99.3.2

Bowl & Vessel

KEY IDEAS

- Native people lived along the Mississippi River long before European explorers came to North America.
- Archaeologists gave the name "Mound Builders" to ancient people who built mounds along the Mississippi River.

Caddo
Mississippi Valley (United States) Arkansas or Oklahoma
Bowl & Vessel, 1250-1500
Ceramic
The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund, 90.2.7 and 90.2.3

Introduction

Earthen mounds are among the evidence left by a people who lived long ago along the Mississippi River. These people were farmers who settled into one area and stayed through all the seasons of sowing, growing and reaping. Since pottery is heavy to move and breaks easily, it is not usually made by people who are continually on the move.

Vessel

Pottery has been excavated from some of the earthen mounds. This clay jar was unearthed in present-day Arkansas. It was hand-made using the coiling technique. The coils of clay were wound around to build up the sides of the jar and then pinched together and smoothed. The design was made by scratching lines into the wet clay after the pot was formed, then the pot was fired to harden the clay.

Bowl

This bowl was also discovered in the region of present-day Arkansas. Many of the pots found in this area were from burial chambers. This is called an effigy bowl, because it contains an image, or effigy, of a bird. Birds were believed to have spiritual powers because they could fly and they were closer to the Great Spirit. Effigy bowls like this one were often used for religious purposes.

Coiling

Like most pottery from the Mississippi River Valley these pots contain ground shell mixed into the clay. The addition of shell made possible the production of larger and more durable pottery because it reduced shrinking which might cause a pot to crack during the firing process.

Illustration of coiling technique

It is interesting to note that wooden bowls very similar to this ceramic bowl were carved several centuries later by the Pawnee people, descendents of the Caddoans who moved onto the plains. The influence of the Mississippi Mound Building cultures extended into many regions of North America.

Mound Cities

Long before Europeans explored North America, farmers had made mounds along the fertile Mississippi River Valley. Temples as well as homes for important members of society were built on top of these huge mounds. Other people lived in the thatched huts that surrounded the mounds. Wooden fortifications around the mound cities protected them. The people who lived in these cities were farmers and skilled artists who produced beautiful and useful objects, including pottery. Some smaller mounds built by native people of Minnesota are located near Red Wing.

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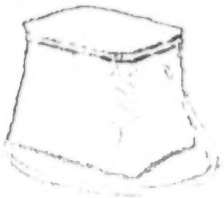
Northeast Introduction

Feast Ladle


Basket

Bandolier Bag

Morrison Collage

We honor the earth, for it is our Grandmother, and its gifts are of our Grandmother. We know our Grandmother changes her spirits from cold to warm, from warm to hot, from hot to warm, from warm to cold. This is her cycle, but with each change she gives us the gifts that are appropriate and necessary.

- Ignatia Broker, Ojibwe

The art of the Woodlands people is closely related to the natural environment. The territories of the Woodlands people have extended from the Atlantic seaboard to the Mississippi River. Although the terrain varies from seacoast to mountains, valleys, and inland waters, one element was common to all - the forests. Everything the people needed to survive came from the trees, the plants, and the animals of the forest.

Woodlands people can be divided into two major language groups, Iroquoian and Algonquian. Each language group is composed of people that share certain cultural characteristics, even though they varied in lifestyle. Historically, the Iroquois were known as the "People of the Longhouse" because of the rectangular, barrel-roofed communal houses in which they lived. Conical or domed wigwams were common to the Algonquian group. Woodlands people maintained a complex political system and trade network. The confederation of the Iroquois, which was made up of six nations, served as one model for European colonists when they formed the United States government.

European Contact

The Woodlands people along the eastern seaboard were among the first Native Americans to feel the impact of European immigration. In the beginning, traders' demand for furs created an economic opportunity for the American Indians. At the same time, increasing numbers of white settlers eventually forced the Woodlands people west or north into Canada in order to survive.

The Ojibwe People

Among the Woodlands people to be affected were the Ojibwe, who moved into the Great Lakes region from the east in the 18th century. Today, the Ojibwe, or Chippewa, are among the largest of American Indian nations. They live in parts of Canada, Michigan, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and Minnesota.

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There are seven Ojibwe reservations in Minnesota. In their own language, the Ojibwe refer to themselves as Anishinabe, which means "original people."

The Cycle of Life
In the past, the seasons of the year guided the lives and occupations of all Ojibwe people. In winter, small communities based on family groups lived in the forests, where they constructed wigwams of bent saplings and birchbark. Men hunted game. Women tanned hides and made and decorated objects for everyday use. With the first snowfall, the people gathered by the fire in the evenings to tell stories, teaching their children history and tradition.

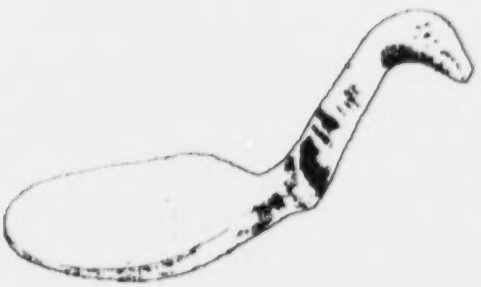
In spring, the people gathered in the maple groves to collect sap to make sugar. During the summer, villages were set up on lakeshores. Here, the men fished, and women planted crops like corn, squash, and pumpkins, and gathered wild berries. By late August, it was time to harvest the wild rice that grew in the shallow lake waters. When harvest was complete, the Ojibwe trapped and fished to stock up for winter. The cycle began again as they moved back to the forests for the winter months.

Identity
In the words of the people of the Red Lake Reservation in Minnesota, *"To be an Ojibwe is to sense the movement of nature, to learn from the winds, the waters, and the richness of the earth. Our land was always our teacher and always will be. That is why we cherish it and seek to save it for our children and grandchildren and all generations to come."*

Tribal Web Site
Iroquois web site: http://www.sixnations.org/

Feast Ladle

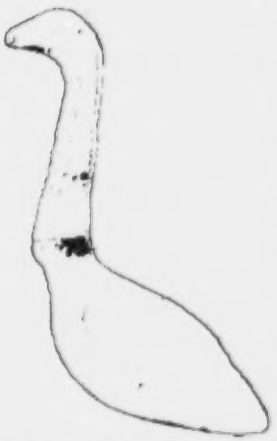
KEY IDEAS
- Woodlands people held feasts to offer thanksgiving.
- Birds have spiritual importance to Woodlands people.



Seneca
Woodlands region (United States)
Feast ladle, 19th century
Wood
The Christina N. and Swan J. Turnblad Memorial Fund 89.89.2

Introduction
Feasts were very important ceremonies among the Woodlands people. Their purpose was to give thanks for everything they took from nature in order to survive and thrive. When sap was gathered from maple trees or wild rice harvested from lakes, the people held feasts of thanksgiving. Each person attending a feast brought his or her own ladle. The men carved these ladles from wood.

Symbolism
This ladle is in the form of a bird. The spoon is the bird's body, while the handle is the head and neck. The only surface markings are the dots that represent the bird's eyes and the line that indicates the opening of the bird's beak.



Another view of the Feast Ladle

Woodlands people believed birds were spiritual creatures because they could soar to heights that humans could not reach. Ladles carved in the form of a bird were often used for religious purposes.

Other Ladles

Lodzi Wood Spoon
This wooden spoon, made around the same time as the Woodlands ladle, was carved by people in central Africa.

Wood Spoon
North East Zambia
Lodzi
98.9.3

Plains Horn Spoon
This spoon, made of animal horn by Native American Plains people, was carved about the same time as the Woodlands ladle.

Horn Spoon
North American Plains
92.10

Chippewa Wood Feast Spoon with Bird Effigy
Here is a similar ladle, also made by a Woodlands tribe, in the Institute's collection.

Wood Feast Spoon with Bird Effigy
North American Chippewa 89.89.1

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English Silver Spoon
This silver spoon was made by an artist from England at the beginning of the twentieth-century.

Oliver Baker
English
Silver Spoon, 1903
L99.184.11

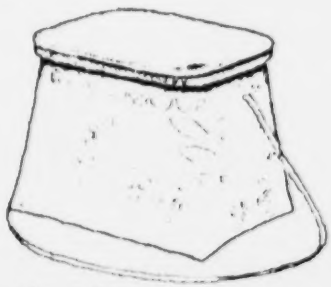
Mesquakie Ladle
This Ladle was carved very recently, in 1986, by Arthur Black Cloud, a member of the Mesquakie tribe of Iowa.

Arthur Black Cloud Ladle
North American
Mesquakie
91.146

Basket

KEY IDEAS

- Ancient Woodlands people created everything they needed from the natural resources around them.
- The bark of a birch tree is an extremely versatile material.



Algonquin
Woodlands region (United States)
Basket, early 20th century
Scraped Birch Bark
The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund 90.52.2

Introduction

The bark of a birch tree is an extremely versatile material. It can be folded, sewn, and made into everything from canoes to containers. The birchbark was cut from the tree in the spring after which it would grow back. Because birchbark is composed of different colored layers, a two-tone design could be made by drawing the design on the bark and then scraping away the top layer. Then the container was cut from the bark, folded into shape, and sewn together with spruce root.

Design

This symmetrical, "mirror image," design was probably derived from European patterns. However the artist's use of two rabbits suggests the attraction animals held for the Woodlands people. The rabbit, called wa-bo-os by the Ojibwe, was considered a brother. Traditionally, only women made birchbark containers. Today, both Woodlands men and women make them.

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Bandolier Bag

Anishinabe (Ojibwe)
Woodlands region (United States)
Bandolier Bag, early 20th century
Beadwork on muslin and black velvet, wool yarn
Bequest of Dorothy Record Bauman 74.63.8

KEY IDEAS

- Ojibwe women are famous for their floral beadwork designs.
- Influenced by European pouches, Ojibwe bandolier bags became decorative accessories that were worn by men.

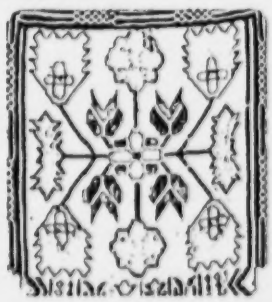
Introduction

This shoulder-strap pouch is called a bandolier bag. It was fashioned after a type of pouch carried by British soldiers. Woodland Indian men wore bandolier bags as objects of prestige. Sometimes they wore more than one at a time. This kind of bag was so valuable that the Woodlands people could trade one bag to the neighboring Dakota people for a pony.

Long before Europeans came to North America Ojibwe women designed necklaces using beads made from wood, shells or other materials. The Ojibwe word for beads - *manidoominensag* - means "berries of the Creator." On clothing, women made designs by sewing on dyed porcupine quills. European glass beads, introduced in the 17th century, gradually replaced quillwork on bags like this one.

Design

This part of the bag, featuring a geometric floral design, was made on a loom; then it was sewn onto the bag. A loom consisted of long threads that were stretched across a rectangular wooden frame. Beads were strung on another thread that was woven over and under the longer threads to form this design.



Technique

The curving floral design on the straps was made by stitching the beads directly onto the cloth. It is believed that French nuns in Quebec taught this technique to the Ojibwe artists. The style of the flowers was probably influenced by folk art that European settlers brought with them to the New World.

Compare It

The curving floral designs on the shoulder strap of this Bandolier Bag are quite different from the geometric designs on the pipe bag made by a Lakota artist of the Great Plains region. Although the shape of the two bags is similar, Woodlands people were inspired by the organic shapes of the plants, vines and flowers they observed all around them. The designs used by the Lakota people are geometric; that is straight-edged, repeated shapes that may be symbolic of, but do not mimic, nature.

Lakota, Great Plains Region (United States)
Pipe bag, about 1885
Leather, glass beads, porcupine quills and feathers, Bequest of Dorothy Record Bauman 74.63.15

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Morrison Collage

George Morrison, Anishinabe (Ojibwe) 1919-2000
Woodlands region (United States)
Collage IX: Landscape, 1974
Wood
The Frances E. Andrews Fund 75.24

KEY IDEAS

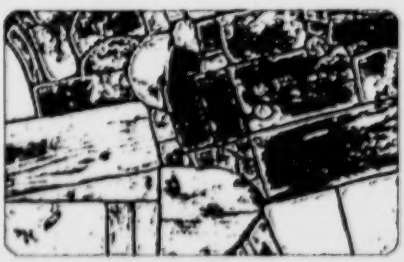
- This collage was made to be displayed on a wall in a large space like a museum.
- The abstract patterns created by the assembled wood pieces are based on the natural

Introduction

This large wood collage was made by George Morrison, an artist who was born on the Grand Portage Indian Reservation in Minnesota. Morrison studied art in New York and in Europe, and lived for many years in the New York area.

Morrison glued pieces of wood to a surface to create this abstract composition. Some of the pieces of wood were found in nature. Although we might not recognize it at first glance, the subject is a landscape. See if you can find some elements of nature: sky, land, water, rocks, horizon. Unlike other works of art in Surrounded by Beauty, this collage was made to be displayed on a wall rather than used for a specific, ordinary purpose.

In this search for my own reality, I seek the power of the rock, the magic of the water, the religion of the tree, the color of the wind, and the enigma of the horizon.
- George Morrison



Details

On this detail, we can see the variations in texture, color, size, and shape of the wood pieces that Morrison used to make this section of the collage. Some of the pieces look as if they were found in nature, while others may have been cut to fit a particluar space.

Listen

- His training and early influences
- Natural textures in his work
- What wood grain evokes
- The role of landscape in his work

Access these audio clips on the online version of Surrounded by Beauty: http://www.artsmia.org/surrounded-by-beauty

Audio Transcripts

George Morrison talks about:

His training and early influences:

"My training was very academic, and we drew from models and even casts. I don't regret that I had that kind of training, it was good for me, but I was also influenced by movements that were coming from Europe around the time of my leaving school and reaching ("actions league"?) in New York. My work was beginning to be accepted as a person who was an Indian, but not doing Indian themes. A lot of my techniques probably remain within that context of abstraction, surrealism and expressionism."

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Natural textures in his work:
"Since my student days, I have always been interested in texture. I suppose that comes from growing up around and being close to nature, living around rocks and trees, water, and being influenced by that kind of natural texture."

What wood grain evokes:
"The grain in the wood and the knots in the wood suggest clouds and sun, the movements of clouds in the sky. Could suggest water, but it could also suggest the beach and sand, the crusty sand and the crusty earth or the crusty rocks, or even some of the moss and some of the lichen that's attached to the rocks. Some of that kind of feeling."

The role of landscape in his work:
"The landscape has been primarily one of my main themes in my paintings throughout my life, so therefore I think the horizon line came back full force, consciously and subconsciously."

Compare It
George Morrison created his wood collage in the style of abstract art he studied and practiced, first in art school in Minneapolis, and then as an artist in New York. While wood is certainly a material many artists - including American Indian artists - are familiar with, Morrison uses this material in a way that is different from traditional American Indian arts. Todd Yellow Cloud Augusta has beaded this baby bonnet with traditional Plains images. But as beadwork itself is traditionally women's work, Augusta has broken one tradition by keeping another. Both artists lived and worked within, and outside of, American Indian traditions.

Todd Yellow Cloud Augusta,
Great Plains region (United States),
Oglala Lakota
Baby Bonnet, 1991
Cotton, glass beads
The Christina N. and Swan
J.Turnblad Memorial Fund, 91.93

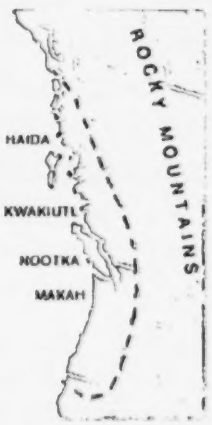
Northwest Introduction

Rattle

Makah Basket

Transformation Mask

The Northwest Coast region is a strip of land, less than 150 miles wide, that extends from the Alaskan Panhandle to present-day northern California. Mountains run the length of this land, which is broken up by numerous inlets and islands formed by offshore mountains. This temperate coastal area was so rich in natural resources that the development of agriculture was unnecessary.



Six different linguistic groups existed within the Northwest Coast region. Fishing was the basis of their early economy. The Nootka people of Vancouver Island and British Columbia and their Makah neighbors to the south specialized in whaling. Farther North, the Haida and Kwakiutl (kwakeyUTl) people built their economy upon the abundant salmon, which could literally be picked from the water during spawning.

The wealthy Native people of the Northwest Coast developed complex social and religious systems and acquired remarkable artistic skills. Men were particularly noted for their carving skills and women for weaving. Although many ceremonial and religious objects were created, most objects were made for the express purpose of proclaiming the wealth and status of important families. The most famous of the many Northwest Coast art forms is the totem pole. Bearing animal crests, the carved totem stood before a planked house in a seaside village, proclaiming the ancestry of its owners.

Haida
Totem Pole, after 1850
wood, malacite, pigments
Gift of George Rickey,
Minneapolis Institute of Arts,
97.169.1

The Potlatch

Although everyone participated in the accumulation of wealth, the principal property owners among the Northwest Coast people were chiefs and nobles. These wealthy people were obligated to give away their material goods in elaborate ceremonies called potlatches, which were held in the winter to celebrate a special event, like a wedding or birth. The measure of a man's prestige in Northwest Coast society was the quantity of possessions he had to give away. But the potlatch was more than an opportunity to display wealth and enhance one's status. It was also a means of redistributing wealth within a stratified society.

The Development of Ceremony and Art

Art objects play a central role in Northwest Coast spiritual practices and ceremonies. Images of animals on works of art represented social groups known as clans. A clan was composed of two or more family groups. Each clan had its own special animal and traced its right to represent the animal to an ancestor who had once made a covenant with it. An animal image not only identified the clan's heritage but also evoked spiritual protection in return for respect and proper ceremony. Animals were

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not worshipped as deities, but rather viewed as spiritual manifestations of nature whose protection could be sought. The most important animals were ravens, bears, beavers, wolves, whales, and eagles, but nearly every animal known to the Northwest Coast people appeared in their art.

Northwest Coast style is highly sophisticated, characterized by bold line and outlines. The complex designs often appear tightly contained within the shape of chests, spoons, pipes, baskets, blankets, rattles, and masks. Animal forms are displayed on two-dimensional surfaces as if they have been split down the back and flattened to show all sides. This produces an image that is symmetrical and carefully rearranged so that all the parts fit the space. The beautifully executed images of Northwest Coast art are abstract and sophisticated, resulting in objects of great elegance.

Contact

Russian traders were the first to come into contact with Northwest Coast peoples in the 1700s. By the end of the century, many settlers from the East had been attracted to the area by the prospect of trade. Iron-edged tools, acquired through trade, contributed to the wood carving skills of Native people, which reached a high point around the middle of the 1700s. Unfortunately, Europeans also introduced diseases that devastated the people. The U.S. and Canadian governments exerted additional pressures in an attempt to assimilate the Northwest Coast people into white culture. The continuance of tribal life was hindered when the potlatch was declared illegal by the Canadian government in 1884. The potlatch ban was repealed in 1951, but many aspects of traditional life had disappeared by that time.

Tribal Web Sites

Haida (and Tlingit) web site: http://www.tlingit-haida.org/
Kwakiutl web site: http://www.umista.org/main/
Makah web site: http://www.makah.com/

Rattle

Haida
Northwest Coast region (United States)
Rattle, 19th-20th century
Cedarwood, leather, abalone and haletosis shell
The Christina N. and Swan J. Turnblad Memorial Fund
75.55

KEY IDEAS

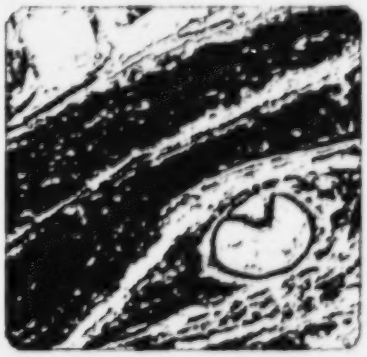
- Haida men of the Northwest Coast were accomplished carvers.
- The raven is an important figure in Northwest Coast stories, associated with stories of creation.

Introduction

This rattle is shaped like a raven. A raven is identified in Northwest Coast art by its long, straight protruding beak. This rattle may have been used to emphasize important points in ceremonies. On the raven's back is a human figure, his tongue is joined to the beak of another bird, symbolizing communication between them and the close relationship between humans and Haida and Tlingit tribal web site: http://www.tlingit-haida.org/

Carving

Haida men were among the most accomplished carvers of the Northwest Coast. To make a rattle, the artist roughed out a piece of wood to an approximate shape. Then it was split down the middle and the interior was hollowed out. Several small stones were placed on the inside and the rattle was sewn together with spruce root. The outside was smoothed, painted and polished. The eyes of the raven are made of abalone, a sea mollusk whose shell is lined with mother-of-pearl.



Navajo tribal web site: http://www.tlingit-haida.org/

Ravens

In Northwest Coast culture, ravens are the subjects of many stories that are associated with creation. In one story, Raven stole the sun from its hiding place and situated it in the heavens, establishing the universe we know today. Legend has it that a raven rattle once came to life while being used and flew away. The rattle would always be held upside down so that the bird could not fly away.

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Makah Basket

Makah, Northwest Coast region
(United States)
Basket, 20th century
Grass
Gift of Stanley H. Brackett 75.13.2

KEY IDEAS

• Whaling scenes were commonly woven into the designs of Northwest Coast baskets.

Introduction

This trinket basket made by a Makah woman is decorated with a scene of whale hunting. The economy of both the Makah and Nootka people, who lived in the area of Vancouver Island off the Northwest Coast, was based on hunting whales. Meat, oil, and bone for all the people of a village came from whales.

Whale, I have given you what you wish to get - my good harpoon. Please hold it with your strong hands... Whale, tow me to the beach of my village, for when you come ashore there, young men will cover your great body with blue-bill duck feathers and the down of the great eagle.

- Makah Trible Song

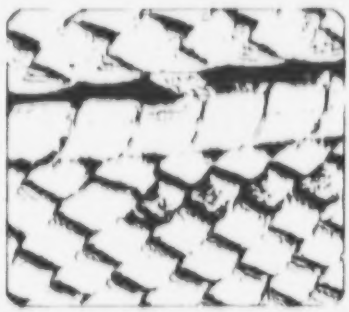
Makah tribal web site: http://www.makah.com/

Whaling

The whale was as important to these people as the buffalo was to the Plains people, and it was treated with equal respect. Only the high-ranking men of the society could hunt whales, a very dangerous activity considering that whales can weigh as much as 40 tons. Before whaling, they conducted ceremonies to ensure the cooperation of the whale. As the harpooned whale was brought to shore, the whole village came to meet it and honor it as a guest.

Materials

This basket is woven of different pattern flexible grasses wrapped around stiff vegetable stems. A circular pattern of ducks is woven into the cover of the basket and on sides, between the whaling scene. The base of the basket is made of cedar bark.



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Transformation Mask

Richard Hunt, Kwakiutl, born 1951
Northwest Coast region (United States)
Transformation Mask, 1993
Cedar, pigment, cloth, string and wood
The Anne and Hadlai Hall Fund, 93.42

KEY IDEAS

- This mask refers to the Kwakiutl belief in the ability of animals and humans to transform into one another.
- Richard Hunt, the artist who made this mask, preserves traditional Kwakiutl practices in wood sculpture.

Introduction

According to Kwakiutl creation stories, there once was a time when the only difference between birds, fish, animals and humans was their skin covering, and they all could transform themselves into other forms at will. Animals could become human and humans could become animals. These ideas still guide Kwakiutl religious traditions and make up the meaning of this Transformation mask. As part of a dance (view video of dance - access this video clip on the online version of Surrounded by Beauty: http://www.artsmia.org/surrounded-by-beauty) the mask is opened and closed, showing the transformation of humans and animals.

Kwakiutl tribal web site: http://www.umista.org/main/

Transformation

The bird on the outside of this mask is a Raven. Raven is a central character in Northwest Coast Indian traditions. In many stories he is a creator of the world, but he can also be a "trickster" who plays mischievous tricks on others. Inside the mask is a two-headed serpent called Sisuitl (SEE-shoe), a powerful character who occasionally eats those who see him. That may explain why Sisuitl is shown in profile on the inside of the mask, looking away from the human head between his two heads. There is a human hand, palm up, on each side of the human face at the center of the mask. Together the images of human, raven and serpent on the mask refer to transformations taking place between these characters.

Another view of the Transformation Mask

The Artist

Richard Hunt is a contemporary Kwakiutl artist who comes from a family of artists. His grandfather taught his father, and his father taught Richard Hunt to create masks, rattles and bowls in the Kwakiutl tradition. Hunt made this Transformation Mask using traditional wood carving techniques and decorated the mask in the traditional colors of the Kwakiutl - black, red and green. In 1991 Hunt became the first native artist to be awarded the Order of British Columbia by the Canadian government. Hunt continues to carve wood in the Kwakiutl tradition, dances at many Kwakiutl ceremonies, and plays golf, soccer and basketball.

Kwakiutl tribal web site: http://www.umista.org/main/

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Plains Introduction

Pipe Bowl

Pipe Bag

Lakota Dress

Scenes of Plains Indian Life

Shield

Baby Bonnet

The vast Great Plains region consists of over a million square miles between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains. Many different groups of native peoples have lived in the Plains. Some Plains tribes include the Pawnee, Commanche, Kiowa, and the Dakota and Lakota (or Sioux).

The Sioux people are perhaps the most familiar to people living in the Upper Midwest. *Sioux* is actually a name given to them by others. The word derives from Ojibwe word meaning *snake-like* or *enemy*. *Dakota*, a word that means *friend*, is what they called themselves. Once all the Dakota spoke the same language. As white settlers moved into Minnesota crowding the Dakota who moved westward on to the Plains, they gradually formed three groups speaking different dialects. Today, we refer to the eastern people as the Dakota or Santee. The western people are known as the Lakota or Teton, and those in the central area are known as the Nakota or Yankton people.

We did not think of the great open plains, the beautiful rolling hills, and the winding streams with tangled growth, as "wild." Only to the white man was nature a "wilderness" and only to him was the land "infested" with "wild" animals and "savage" people. To us it was tame. Earth was bountiful and we were surrounded with the blessings of the Great Mystery. Not until the hairy man from the east came and heaped injustices upon us and the families we loved was it "wild" for us. When the very animals of the forest began fleeing from his approach, then it was that for us the "Wild West" began.

- **Chief Luther Standing Bear, Oglala Sioux**

Transformation of the Plains Peoples

The image of the mounted Plains warrior wearing a feather headdress has become for many people a portrait of all American Indians. Movies and television have played their role in perpetuating this stereotype well into our time. That image is not even an accurate one of the Plains people, much less of all Indians. For over 2000 years, before the arrival of the Europeans, many Plains people lived as hunters and farmers on the margins of the Great Plains in permanent villages of earth-covered lodges. They raised corn, squash, beans, and sunflowers, and hunted game.

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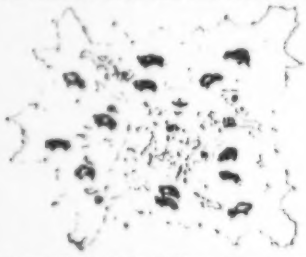
In the 17th century, the Plains Indians acquired some of the horses that had been brought to North America by the Spanish. By the 18th century, most of the Plains farmers had been transformed into nomadic buffalo hunters. The nomadic period, which extended only from about 1750 to 1880, is a relatively short one in the long history of the Plains people.

The Great Plains

The vast Great Plains region consists of over a million square miles between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains, running north to the prairie provinces of Canada and south to Texas. The terrain includes bluffs, mesas, wooded valleys, and rugged wasteland, but mostly it is grassland. In the 18th century, this grazing land supported the abundant buffalo herds that furnished the Plains people with everything they needed for survival. Before acquiring the horse, Plains people hunted buffalo on foot, carrying their few possessions on travois, pole sleds pulled by dogs. Horses permitted greater efficiency in hunting and much greater mobility. Even tipis grew larger once horses were available to transport the longer poles required.

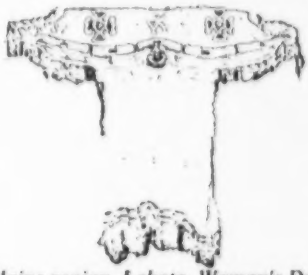
Development of Art

As more efficient hunters, the Plains people had more time to devote to making art. The Plains art of the 18th and 19th centuries grew out of their nomadic lifestyle. Because they were constantly moving to new hunting areas, their art, like their other belongings, had to be portable. The everyday objects of their lives provided surfaces for rich decoration.



Attributed to Cadzi Cody, Wind River Shoshone, Great Plains region (United States), Wyoming, Wind River Reservation, Scenes of Plains Indian Life, about 1900, Elk hide with pigment, Gift of Bruce Dayton, 85.92

Men painted representational scenes on their robes, shields, and tipis.



Northern Plains region, Lakota, Woman's Dress, 20th century, Leather, cotton, copper & glass beads, Gift of James David & John David 74.64.5

Women embroidered clothing with glass beads and porcupine quills and painted geometric designs on hide containers.

The People Today

Conditions were very difficult for Plains people in the 20th century. In spite of this, many have struggled to preserve their traditions. Today over 20,000 Lakota people live on the two adjoining reservations of Pine Ridge and Rosebud in South Dakota, and many others live in urban and rural areas throughout the Midwest. Plains people have a renewed interest in practicing their ancient traditions, generating a flowering of Native American culture and spirituality, language, music, visual arts and business enterprises. They continue to speak their Native languages and to tell their own stories. The Sun Dance, which is their most sacred ceremony, is once again held annually during the summer in many areas of the Plains.

Tribal Web Sites

Comanche web site: http://www.comanchenation.com/
Pawnee web site: http://www.pawneenation.org/

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Pipe Bowl

Lakota
Great Plains region (United States)
Pipe bowl, about 1860
Stone
The Christina N. and Swan J. Turnblad Memorial Fund 89.88

KEY IDEAS

- Tobacco is a special plant for Native Americans, its ceremonial use is very different from the way most Americans use tobacco today.
- Tobacco is used as a medicine, in ceremonies, and given as gifts in traditional American Indian cultures.

Introduction

Native American pipes are often called "peace pipes." Although native people did sometimes smoke when making treaty settlements, pipes were used for many purposes. Because the Plains people believed that smoke carried their words to the Great Spirit, smoking was like saying a prayer. Implements associated with the use of tobacco, including pipes, are considered sacred.

Before talking of holy things, we prepare ourselves by offerings... one will fill his pipe and hand it to the other who will light it and offer it to the sky and the earth... they will smoke together... then will they be ready to talk.

- Chased-By-Bears, Santee Sioux

Symbolism

The image of a bull elk with his outstretched neck and antlers low on his shoulders is carved in shallow relief on the underside of this elbow-shaped pipe bowl. In Lakota culture, elk are often associated with relationships between men and women and marriage. A stem would have been connected to this bowl for smoking. When the stem was connected to the bowl, the pipe represented the universe. When not being used the pipe and stem were always separated.

Pipestone

This pipe is made of a prized stone that is obtained at a quarry near Pipestone, Minnesota. According to legend the red, orange and yellow stone is sacred and linked to ancient ancestors of Indian people. Today, the area where the stone is found is designated as Pipestone National Monument. Only Indian people are allowed to mine or sell the stone. Many Native American sculptors continue the ancient tradition of pipe carving.

Visit the Pipestone National Monument Website.

Elk Dreamer's Society

The circle or hoop near the elk's foreleg may connect this pipe bowl with the Elk Dreamer's Society. The hoop suggests the idea of protection. Dreamers wore this symbol to protect themselves from the power of other animal dreamers, and carried hoops made of twined willow branches or other herbs in dance performances. A mirror was sometimes suspended in the center of the hoop with two crossed cords symbolizing the four directions. The mirror allowed the dreamer to "reflect" his elk power at those who opposed him or to bring others under his power. Although we don't know for certain if this pipe bowl was used in elk ceremonies, it is known that Elk Dreamers preferred small yellow pipes. Perhaps the carver of this pipe bowl purposely chose a yellow-colored stone.

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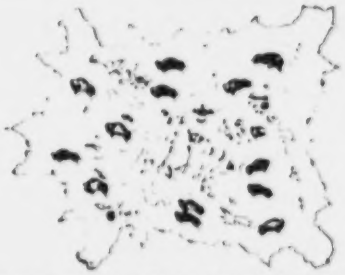
Scenes of Plains Indian Life



Attributed to Cadzi Cody, Wind River Shoshone
Great Plains region (United States)
Wyoming, Wind River Reservation
Scenes of Plains Indian Life, about 1900
Elk hide with pigment
Gift of Bruce Dayton, 85.92

KEY IDEAS

- Hide painting, an ancient tradition among Plains people, was used to record important events.
- This painting depicts important elements of Plains culture - horses, buffalo, and aspects of the Grass

Introduction

Painting on animal hide is an ancient tradition of Plains people. This painting is made on an elk hide. If you look closely, you can see the shape of the four legs, neck, and tail. A Shoshone man named Cadzi Cody painted events he experienced during a time of great change for the Shoshone people: parts of a Sun Dance, a Grass Dance, and a buffalo hunt. These events changed with the times or were lost altogether during Cadzi Cody's adult life on the Wind River Reservation.

Details

The Sun Dance is the most sacred of all Plains ceremonies. During the Sun Dance, men went without food and water and participated in religious ceremonies that included a buffalo head on a pole, seen at the center of this painting. The Sun Dance ceremony was held to thank the Creator for the abundance of the earth and to ask that the needs of the community continue to be met.

Dancers wearing eagle feather bustles and war bonnets dance a Grass Dance around the center of the painting. The Grass Dance has much in common with today's pow-wows, a time for celebrating and socializing. Near the edge of the hide, hunters on horseback are hunting buffalo. The buffalo was so important to the survival of Plains people that they considered it to be sacred.

Elk Hide History

At the time this hide was painted, the Shoshone people were confined on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. Most of the buffalo had been killed by white hunters and the railroad and white settlers demand for land that made up the buffalo's habitat. The government had outlawed the sacred Sun Dance until 1935 in an effort to force Indians to give up old traditions and participate in a new way of life as defined by the government. Cadzi Cody painted events he experienced during a time of great change for the Shoshone people.

He included a scene of the traditional buffalo hunt on this elk hide to make the painting more salable to white tourists visiting the reservation. By including scenes of hunting, dancing, and ceremony, Cadzi Cody was able to earn much needed income from an outside market for images of Indian ceremonies. Today the Sun Dance continues to be practiced by many Plains people in modified ways.

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The Horse

For over 2000 years, before the arrival of the Europeans, many Plains people lived as hunters and farmers on the edges of the Great Plains in permanent villages of earth-covered lodges. In the 17th century, the Plains Indians acquired some of the horses that had been brought to North America by the Spanish, and by the 18th century, most of the Plains farmers had been transformed into nomadic buffalo hunters. The revolution in lifestyle that the horse brought to the Plains can be compared to the revolution in lifestyle brought by the car 200 years later.

One of two spotted horses on Cadzi Cody's painting

On this elk hide, the blue, red and yellow horses represent real horse colors found in nature, such as sorrel, bay or buckskin. There are even two pinto or spotted horses on the elk hide. While the human figures seem stiff as paper cut-outs the horses run, prance, leap and rear into the air, evidence that Cadzi Cody was a skilled observer of the valued horse.

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Pipe Bag

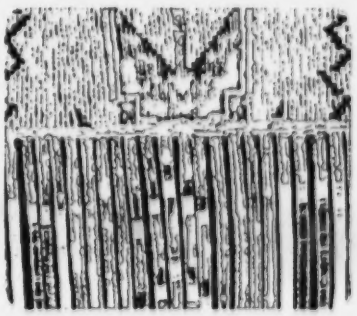
Lakota
Great Plains region (United States)
Pipebag, about 1885
Leather, glass beads, porcupine quills and feathers
Bequest of Dorothy Record Bauman
74.63.15

KEY IDEAS
- Pipe bags containing a pipe and tobacco were carried into battle.
- Both traditional porcupine quills and glass beads from European trade decorate this bag.
- Women embroidered bags and were highly respected for their skill and sense of design.

Introduction
A Plains man carried both tobacco and a pipe in this pipe bag. A pipe bag was as important as a horse or a weapon for a man going into battle. The undecorated portion of hide at the top of the bag was tucked under and flapped over a belt.

Glass beads strung on a thread and stitched on the bag form this design. Glass beads were introduced to Native Americans by European fur traders, and because they were easy to use and easy to find they gradually replaced quills as the most common form of decoration. The quills that adorn this bag came from a porcupine. The quills were flattened and dyed, then wrapped around strips of rawhide and stitched in place.

Who Made It?
Geometric shapes create abstract patterns which probably signified the military society of the man who carried it, but making bags like this was the responsibility of women. Women chose symbolic colors and embroidered beads and quills to create patterns found on clothing and many other items used by their communities. A woman who was skilled at embroidery and created beautiful designs was highly respected in Plains cultures.



Colors
The colors used to dye the porcupine quills came from plants and mineral deposits. The colors chosen to decorate an object like this pipe bag were symbolic, but the object itself determined their meaning. On a pipe bag red is the most sacred color and may represent blood or life. Black and dark blue sometimes mean victory or the number of enemies killed. White stands for winter, which was an honorable time for war.

Video
Teri Brightnose, Ojibwe/Cree, demonstrates the Native American tradition of quilling in this video clip.

Movie Length: 5 minutes & 43 seconds

Access this video clip on the online version of Surrounded by Beauty:
http://www.artsmia.org/surrounded-by-beauty

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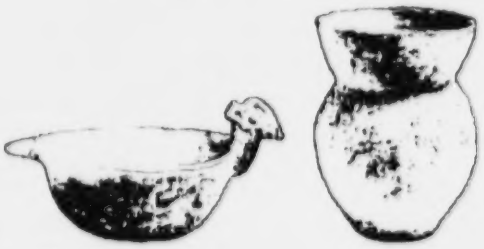
Compare It

The Lakota artist who created the pipe bag belonged to a nomadic people, always on the move following herds of buffalo. The objects the Lakota made and decorated had to be easy to carry, lightweight and durable. Compare the pipe bag with these clay vessels made by the Caddo people of the Mississippi Valley region. The Caddo people could create bulky or fragile containers that would be difficult to move because they didn't need to move them! The Caddo people were farmers who stayed in one spot and farmed the land around them.



Clay Vessels
Arkansas, Caddo, Mississippi Valley (United States) Arkansas or Oklahoma
Bowl & Vessel, 1250-1500
Ceramic
The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund, 90.2.7 and 90.2.3

Crow Shield

KEY IDEAS

- It is the spiritual power of the *image* on a shield rather than the shield itself that provides protection for its owner.
- The buffalo on this shield came to a young Crow man named Humped Wolf in a dream.

Full-Mouth Buffalo (Humped Wolf)
Apsaalooka (Crow)
Great Plains region (United States)
Shield, about 1870
Bison hide, deer hide, owl feathers and pigments
The Christina N. and Swan T. Turnblad Memorial Fund and gift of the Regis Corporation
87.51

Introduction

A rawhide shield was the most important element of protection for a Plains man riding into battle. But it was not the rawhide that protected him. The protection came from the spiritual power of the image that was drawn or painted upon the shield. The image of the buffalo, which appears on this shield, came in a dream to a young Crow Indian man by the name of Humped Wolf

Humped Wolf's Vision

After being wounded in battle, Humped Wolf wandered onto the prairie during a blizzard and became lost. Humped Wolf came upon a freshly killed buffalo. To protect himself from the elements, he crawled inside the carcass. It was here that he received his vision.

Humped Wolf later described his vision to the elders, who instructed him how to represent his vision on a shield and care for it. The dark bent lines painted in the upper left area represent the bullets or arrows the shield will repel. Owl feathers were attached in hopes of capturing the ability the owl has to see in the dark, which would be of great benefit to a man in battle.

Detail of Crow Shield featuring the bullets or arrows & owl feathers

Using The Shield

During a battle, many Plains men circled their enemy using only their shield for protection to demonstrate their faith in its religious and spiritual power. The shields had to be cared for in specific ways that would preserve their protective powers. Humped Wolf's shield could never be placed on the ground. When Humped Wolf was traveling and needed to rest, he placed his shield on a sagebrush plant.

Humped Wolf made another version of this shield, which is now in the collection at the National Museum of the American Indian in New York. A third version is in a private collection. Many other shields are also in collections around the world. Every shield belonged at one time to a Plains man who followed strict guidelines to preserve its protective power. For some traditional Plains Indians, the power of these shields is still alive and it is hurtful if the shields are not cared for properly.

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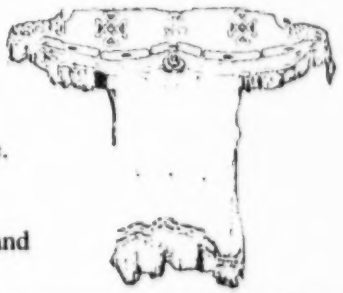
Lakota Dress



Northern Plains region (United States)
Lakota
Dress, 20th century
Leather, cotton, copper and glass beads
Gift of James David and John David
74.64.5

KEY IDEAS

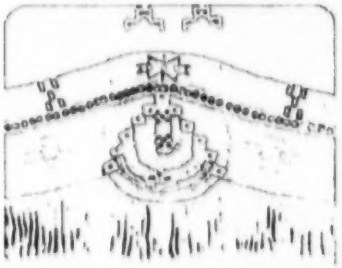
- This dress was the "best dress" of a Lakota woman.
- Plains people incorporated a creation story into the design of the yoke.

Introduction

This was the "best" dress of a Lakota woman, made from animal hide and decorated with glass beads. She might have worn it while she danced. Imagine how the beads would sparkle in the sunlight, and how the fringe would swish and sway. Bells sewn onto the lower part of the dress would tinkle with her movements. Although we may appreciate the dress's beauty in this photograph or a case in a museum, it was made for dancing.

Symbols

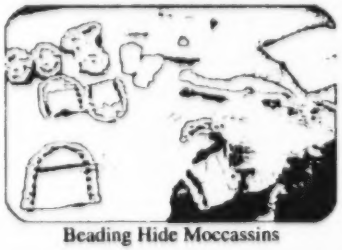
The beaded yoke is more than just a decoration. It shows a blue sky reflected in a prairie pond that is the home of the sacred turtle. The U-shape at the lower center of the yoke represents the turtle. In the creation stories of many Plains people, the Creator placed mud from under the sea on the back of the turtle to form the earth. The turtle came to be a protector of women since they too have the power of creation, by giving birth.



Detail of Lakota Dress featuring the turtle

Style

This dress was made from the skins of two animals, probably deer or elk, in a style specific to the Lakota people. It was women's work to tan hides, cut and sew the skins together and bead the yoke. Before European contact most Plains clothing was made from animal skins. This dress was made in the 20th century, well after Plains people had come into contact with European-Americans, but still was made in the traditional way.



Beading Hide Moccassins

The Legend of Grandmother Turtle

In one of the creation stories told by the Cheyenne, neighbors of the Lakota, before people lived on the earth it was covered by water. The Creator wanted to use mud from under the water to make solid ground, but needed a place to put the mud on top of the water. Turtle rose to the top of the water to carry the mud that became earth. To this day, turtles walk very slowly because they carry the weight of the world on their backs. Some Native Americans refer to the earth as Turtle Island.

Video

Teri Brightnose, Ojibwe/Cree, demonstrates the Native American tradition of beading in this video clip.

Movie Length: 3 minutes & 25 seconds

Access this video clip on the online version of Surrounded by Beauty:
http://www.artsmia.org/surrounded-by-beauty

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Baby Bonnet

KEY IDEAS
- Cloth baby bonnets came from Euro-Americans in the 19th century.
- Traditionally Plains women decorated objects with quill and beadwork designs.

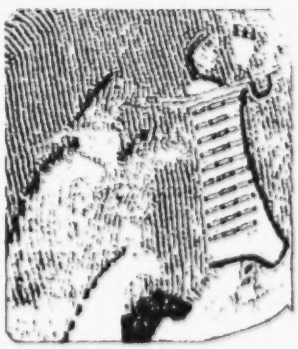
Introduction
This baby bonnet was made relatively recently, in 1991, by Todd Yellow Cloud Augusta, a member of the Oglala band of tribe. In traditional Plains culture, beadwork was the art of women. In the 19th century they would obtain undecorated cloth baby bonnets from the Sears Roebuck Catalogue, and then richly decorate them with glass beads or porcupine quills. Although Augusta has broken a Plains tradition by doing beadwork (women's work), he continues another tradition - that only men can create representational art. Here, the bonnet is covered with pictographs, scenes showing daily life in times past.

Todd Yellow Cloud Augusta
Great Plains region (United States), Oglala Lakota
Baby Bonnet, 1991
Cotton, glass beads
The Christina N. and Swan J.Turnblad Memorial Fund, 91.93

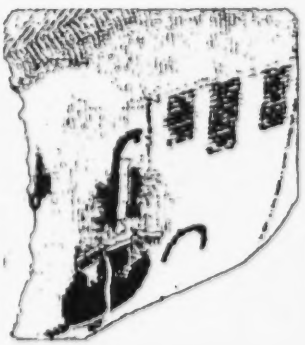
Ho! Ye Sun, Moon, Stars, all ye that move in the heavens,
I bid you hear me!
Into your midst has come a new life.
Consent ye, I implore!
Make its path smooth, that it may reach the brow of the first hill!

- Omaho song introducing a child to the cosmos

Details
On one side of the bonnet, a man wearing a buffalo hide robe is leading six horses that are depicted in many different colors. Horses were a favorite decorative subject because they were a measure of wealth.



On the other side of the bonnet the artist shows a woman drying meat on a rack. Plains men traditionally were the hunters, but women were responsible for tanning hides and preserving the meat for winter.



American Flags
On the top of the bonnet, Augusta beaded a five point yellow star surrounded by a pair of crossed flags. Flags have been popular in American Indian art and especially with the Lakota since the mid-19th century. They were given as gifts when Plains elders visited Washington DC, and by government officials visiting the western territories as early as 1790. Flying an American flag in camps and reservations was a sign of friendly intentions toward visitors. The flag was awarded to American Indian veterans who honored the warrior tradition by enlisting in U.S. armed forces. Stars with five

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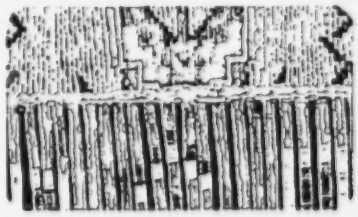
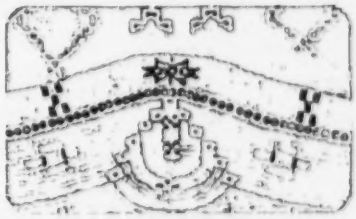
points, like those on the bonnet, were adapted in the late 19th century from the American flag, replacing earlier four pointed stars that symbolized the four directions.

Style

The representations of everyday scenes on the baby bonnet are different than the abstract designs on the Dakota Pipe Bag or the Lakota women's dress. In the designs on the bag and the dress, abstract forms symbolize the natural world. Although the representational style on the bonnet is not as common as the abstract style found on the bag and dress, both are traditional in Plains beadwork. One is considered a proper style for men (representation) and the other style is reserved for women (abstract). Some colors that appear on the bonnet are not found on the dress or bag. They reflect the greater variety of colored beads available now, as well as the personal taste of the artist.



Detail of Lakota Pipe Bag



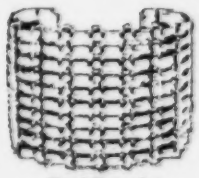
Detail of Lakota Dress

Southwest Introduction

Acoma Jar

Martinez Pot

Dine Bracelet


Zuni Bracelet

Pima Basket

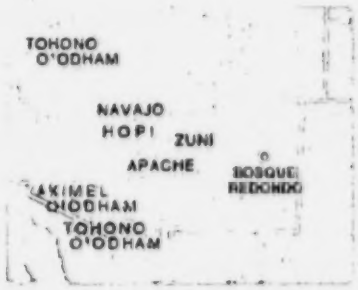
Dine
Wedding Basket

Tohono
O'odham Basket

It is impossible to think of people here without thinking of a particular mountain that they have a special relationship with. They look to it for all sorts of things; portents of weather immediately ahead, signs of winter they will have; they look to it for evergreens and eagle feathers which they use in dances, and for pigments and other materials to use for their ceremonies.

-Alfonso Ortiz, Tewa Pueblo

The traditions of the native people of the Southwest are deeply rooted in the land where their ancestors have lived for tens of thousands of years. This vast region - stretching from what today is southern Utah and Colorado, throughout New Mexico and Arizona, and south into Mexico - is the oldest known area of human habitation on the North American continent. In this land of desert and mountains native people gathered wild plants and cultivated their own crops. To compensate for much needed rainfall they constructed irrigation canals, some of which are still in use, in Arizona. They also established trade networks stretching from present-day Georgia through Central America.



Making Vessels

In the Southwest as in other areas, the preparation and storage of food required containers and vessels. Baskets have been woven for these purposes in the Southwest for 8,000 years. Pottery has been made for well over 2,000 years. People decorated these functional objects with images of their environment that were vital to them, like the sun that caused their crops to grow, and the clouds, which were the source of life-giving rain. The environment influenced not only the decoration of objects but also the order of many of the people's ceremonial and daily activities.

The Native People

Some Southwest groups of native people are known as Pueblo, from the Spanish word for town, because of the multi-unit adobe dwellings in which they lived. Today, many of the Pueblo people live much as their ancestors did along the Rio Grande River in New Mexico. The Hopituh (Hopi), who occupy the mesa country of northeastern Arizona and the Zuni, who live in west-central New Mexico,

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are Pueblo people. The Akimel O'odham (Pima) and the Tohono O'odham (Papago) were traditionally farmers who lived on irrigated land along the Gila River in southern Arizona. While most of the Southwestern people trace their origin to the ancient inhabitants, the Diné (Navajo) and Inde (Apache) are relative newcomers who migrated from their homeland in northwestern Canada sometime around 1400.

Result of Contact

The Spanish were the first Europeans to occupy the Southwest in the 16th century. They introduced horses as well as livestock (sheep and cattle) and fruit orchards to the area. They also exploited the native people by using them as unpaid laborers, imposing different cultural practices on them, and encroaching on their lands. This resulted in a revolt in 1680, when the native Pueblo people drove out the Spanish, who did not regain control until 1694. From that time on, the Southwest was under the control of first Spain, then Mexico, and eventually the United States.

Through a combination of epidemic disease and the impact of Spanish control, Pueblo populations were reduced by two-thirds within two centuries following the arrival of the Spanish. The Diné (Navajo), who had assimilated some aspects of the Pueblo culture and depended upon them for trade, were eventually driven north by incoming settlers and forced to resort to raiding in order to survive. As more white settlers from the east arrived in the 19th century, the U.S. government took steps to halt the raiding. Under the leadership of Kit Carson, the army destroyed Diné crops and livestock, forcing the people to surrender. The Diné were imprisoned on a barren reservation at Bosque Redondo in New Mexico. Five years later, the Diné were reduced to such a small number that they no longer posed a threat and were consequently allowed to return to their homeland, which by then was surrounded by white settlements. Despite this history of oppression, the Diné nation is one of the largest of all American Indian nations today, numbering over 100,000 people.

The Southwest Today

Although the culture of the people of the Southwest was vastly disrupted by the arrival of Europeans, they have managed to retain many of the artistic traditions of their ancestors and to develop new skills. Pueblo potters of the Southwest initiated a revival of pottery in the early 20th century. Many contemporary Pueblo potters continue to make their pottery by the ancient coiling method. The weaving techniques of Diné women are largely unchanged since they learned the art from the Pueblo men centuries ago. From the earliest times, Diné people made jewelry from natural materials. After they learned silversmithing from Mexican artisans, they began to produce silver jewelry. A'shiwi (Zuni) and Hopituh (Hopi) artists learned the skill from Diné smiths. Native American artists of the Southwest today continue to create the arts for which they are famous.

Tribal Web Sites

Navajo tribal web site: http://www.navajo.org/
Hopi tribal web site: http://www.hopi.nsn.us/

Acoma Jar

Acoma Pueblo
Southwest region (United States)
Vessel, about 1880
Ceramic, pigment
Gift of the Hennepin County Historical Society 89.93

KEY IDEAS

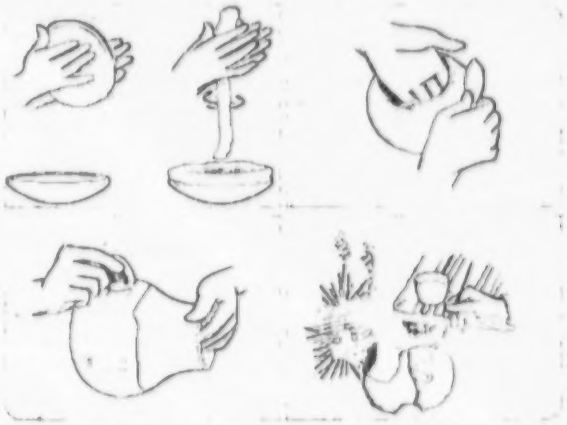
- Acoma potters are famous for their fine, thin-walled pots.
- Each Acoma pot is a different variation of lines, scrolls, and geometric shapes.

Introduction

Because the Acoma Pueblo is located on an isolated mesa, the Acoma tradition of pottery-making has changed very little from ancient times. The dark gray clay common to the region is very dense, permitting the potters to make strong, lightweight pottery with very thin walls.

How was it made?

Acoma potters mix their clay with ground-up bits of broken, fired pots. This prevents the new pot from cracking in the firing process. A pot is made by coiling clay in a circular manner and pinching the coils together, smoothing them to form the sides of the pot. The pot is hardened ("fired") in an open fire. Once a pot is fired only a few elements are used to form designs—lines, scrolls, and geometric shapes—but there are endless variations so that every pot is different. Mixing iron ore with the beeweed plant makes a black paint. Paint is applied with a chewed yucca leaf to the surface of a pot that has been covered with thin white clay slip.



Illustrations featuring "coiling technique," "smoothing," "addition of slip & resmoothing," & "painting."

How was it used?

The shape of each Acoma pot provides a clue as to how it was used. This jar may have been made to sell to tourists, but its shape reflects a type of jar that was traditionally used for the storage or preparation of food.

Compare It

Compare these two Acoma jars. While both jars were made using the same techniques, different artists choose different variations of line, shape and colors to produce pottery that shares the Acoma style but differs as individual works of art.

Acoma Pueblo
Southwest region (United States)
Ceramic jar, 19th century
polychromed earthenware
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne H. MacFarlane, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 86.54

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are Pueblo people. The Akimel O'odham (Pima) and the Tohono O'odham (Papago) were traditionally farmers who lived on irrigated land along the Gila River in southern Arizona. While most of the Southwestern people trace their origin to the ancient inhabitants, the Diné (Navajo) and Inde (Apache) are relative newcomers who migrated from their homeland in northwestern Canada sometime around 1400.

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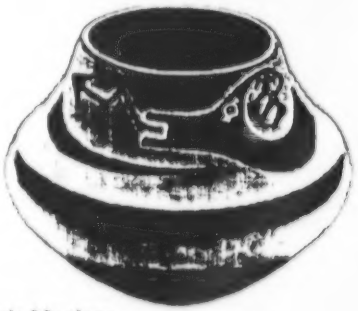
Tribal Web Sites

Navajo tribal web site: http://www.navajo.org/
Hopi tribal web site: http://www.hopi.nsn.us/

Martinez Pot

KEY IDEAS

- Maria Martinez' pottery derives from forms of pottery made by the ancestors of Southwestern native people.
- Like other traditional potters of the Southwest, Maria Martinez used the hand-coiling method and fired her pots outdoors.



Maria Martinez
San Ildefonso Pueblo, 1886-1980
New Mexico, Southwest region (United States)
Bowl, early 20th century
Ceramic
Gift of Barbara L. Strom 86.94.1

Introduction

Maria Martinez is one of the most famous artists of the Southwest. She and her husband, Julian, revived an ancient pottery tradition at San Ildefonso Pueblo in the early years of the 20th century. They were inspired by pottery found in the excavation of an ancient site. Upon seeing the ancient designs, Maria began to make pots and Julian painted them.

Out of the silences of meditation come purity and power which eventually become apparent in our art: the many spirits which enter about us, in us, are transformed within us, moving from an endless past not gone, not dead, but with a threshold that is the present. From this time sense, for this experience deep within, our forms are created.

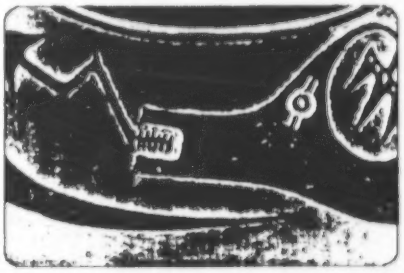
-Maria Martinez

How was it made?

Maria and Julian Martinez together created this style of Pueblo pottery. First the surface of the bowl was polished, then the area around the figure (the dull part) was painted with thinned red clay slip. A fire is built under and on top of the pots, reducing the oxygen around the pots and causes them to turn black. The polished portions look shiny and the area around the figure that was painted with slip looks dull.

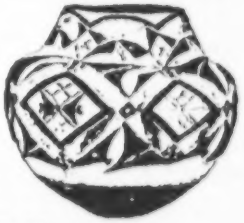
Surface Designs

The horned water serpent that encircles the neck of this bowl is Avanyu. This figure is related to an ancient deity that was believed to have brought to humans the knowledge of art, science, and agriculture. The zig-zag shape near the serpent's mouth represents lightning. Julian adapted this design from others he found on ancient pottery shards.



Compare It

These two jars were made by Pueblo artists of the Southwest region of the United States, and share the same shape and size. But that is where their similarities end. The two vessels have decorations that are very different. The pot above, made by Maria and Julian Martinez of the San Ildefonso Pueblo, relies on variations in texture to allow the figures on the completely black pot to be seen. The pot to the right, made by an artist from the Acoma Pueblo, relies on variations in line for its decoration. Contrasting black lines on a white background make the complex design stand out.



Acoma Pueblo
Southwest region (United States)
Vessel, about 1880
Ceramic, pigment
Gift of the Hennepin County Historical Society
89.93

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Diné Bracelet

Walter Henry
Diné (Navajo)
Southwest region (United States)
Bracelet, about 1935
Silver
Bequest of Virginia Doneghy,
90.58.77

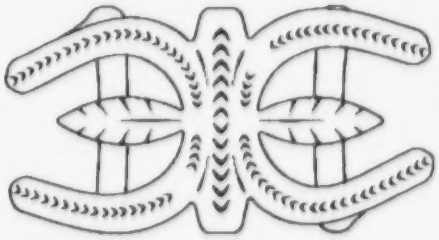
KEY IDEAS
- This bracelet design expresses the Diné (Navajo) concept of beauty.
- The design of this bracelet is related to the Diné (Navajo) story of creation.

Introduction
The *Diné* (Navajo) are relative newcomers to the Southwest. They are believed to have migrated from Northwestern Canada to the Southwest around 1400. In their own language, they call themselves Diné (DEE-nay), which means "the people."

The underlying principle of the Diné people is the term *hozho* (HO-jzho), which means beauty. Walter Henry, a Diné (Navajo) man, created this bracelet according to the principle of hozho. In order to make an object of beauty, the maker had to be in a state of beauty himself. The Diné (Navajo) concept of beauty is expressed in an object by its sense of harmony, balance, and order. In the Diné story of creation, the earth was brought to order by a four-part division. The bracelet has a center symbolizing the place where the first Diné entered this world. The center rectangular bar and the leaves to either side point to the four directions of the sacred mountains of Diné (Navajo) lands.

Navajo tribal web site: http://www.navajo.org/

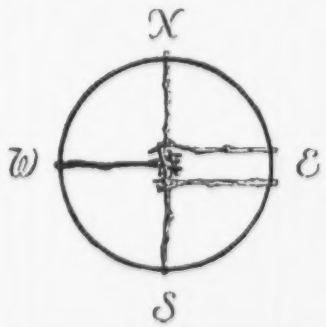
Balance & Harmony
In Diné (Navajo) thought, straight lines are associated with inactivity or maleness, while curved lines correspond to activity or femaleness. Each is a complement of the other and in the design of the bracelet they form a perfectly balanced whole. Balance and harmony are important parts of the Diné (Navajo) concept of *hozho*.



Navajo tribal web site: http://www.navajo.org/

Diné Hogans
The traditional home of the Diné (Navajo) was a structure made of tree bark, poles, and earth called a hogan. Many Diné (Navajo) continue to build and live in hogans today. Like the bracelet, the hogan is constructed according to *hozho*.

A Navajo hogan in Arizona



Imagine that you are looking down on a hogan with its roof removed. The hogan is of a circular shape divided into four sections by the supporting poles. The doorway (framed by double poles) faces to the east to welcome the morning sun. The other poles point to the west, north, and south; together the supporting poles point to the four sacred mountains of the Diné (Navajo) homeland.

Navajo tribal web site: http://www.navajo.org/

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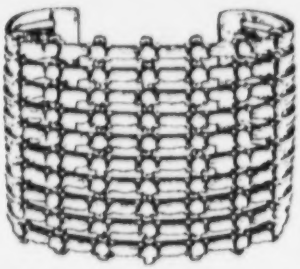
Zuni Bracelet

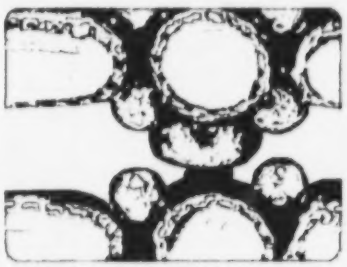


Zuni
Southwest region (United States)
Bracelet, about 1950
Silver, Turquoise
Bequest of Virginia Doneghy, 90.58.55

KEY IDEAS
- The Zuni learned silversmithing from their Diné (Navajo) neighbors.
- The Zuni gave greater emphasis to turquoise in their designs.

Introduction
The Zuni were Pueblo people who traded with the Diné (Navajo) and learned from them the art of making silver jewelry. The Zuni and the Diné (Navajo) developed their skills in very different ways. Both peoples use turquoise, but the Zuni use it in repetitive patterns that may cover the entire piece of jewelry. In this bracelet, silver serves only as the setting for the stones.

For the Zuni, turquoise contains the two colors that symbolize the essential elements of life - blue of water and green of plant growth.



Complex Design
The Zuni culture is based on a complex system of fifteen clans. The clans cut across all other social, political and religious groupings. This intricate Zuni bracelet expresses the complexity of Zuni culture. The delicate style of many small turquoise stones set into silver is called needlepoint.

Compare & Contrast
The Diné (Navajo) bracelet demonstrates harmony and simplicity in its design, while the Zuni bracelet design expresses complexity and multiplicity. Each bracelet reflects the belief system and culture of the people who made it.

Walter Henry,
Diné (Navajo)
Southwestern region (United States)
Bracelet, about 1935
Silver
Bequest of Virginia Doneghy
90.58.77

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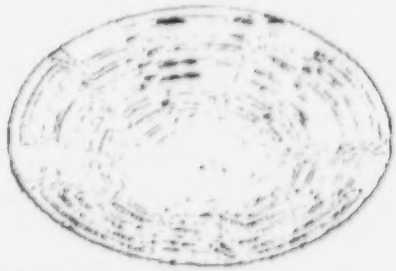
Pima Basket



Akimel O'odham (Pima)
Southwest region (United States)
Basket, 19th century
Plant fiber
The Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund 90.69.4

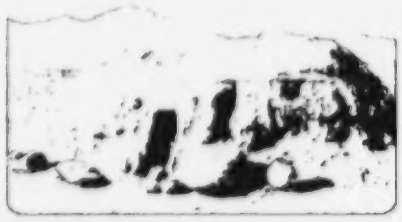
KEY IDEAS

- Squash blossoms designs like those on this basket are used in many variations in the Southwest.
- Pima people continue the tradition of basket weaving as a source of income.

Introduction

Many women of different tribes of the Southwest are accomplished at making beautiful baskets. Especially known for fine baskets are the Akimel O'odham (Pima) women. The Akimel O'odham people live on irrigated farms along the rivers in southern Arizona. Akimel O'odham women weave their baskets from the fibers of plants that grow along the rivers. The Spanish gave them the name Pima, but before contact with the Spanish they referred to themselves by a term meaning "river people." They differ in both language and tradition from the Diné (Navajo) and the Pueblo people.

Navajo tribal web site: http://www.navajo.org/



This photograph of a Pima home was taken by Edward S. Curtis around 1907. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Ethel Morrison Van Derlip Fund, 74.41.11

Design

The design on this basket is called a squash-blossom design. A ball in the center connects to cone shapes, repeated five times to create the pattern. The squash-blossom design is woven in endless variations, from the five-blossom arrangement on this basket to very complex designs including 12 blossoms. The design was originally inspired by buttons on the trousers of Spanish soldiers. It also appears commonly as a form on jewelry.

Continuing Traditions

Toward the end of the 19th century the Gila River was diverted for use by non-Indians. The Akimel O'odham people, who counted on the river for survival, suffered poverty and starvation. By 1900 much of their traditional culture had disappeared except for basketry, which generated income. The few Akimel O'odham basket weavers who are active today are located on the Gila River Reservation in Arizona. They produce high-quality work in both traditional and contemporary designs.

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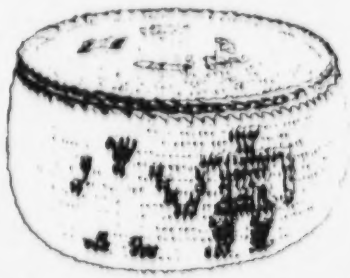
Tohono O'odham Basket



Tohono O'odham (Papago)
Southwestern region (United States)
Miniature Basket, 20th century
Plant fiber
Gift of Mrs. C. C. Bovey, 42.18.130

KEY IDEAS

- Baskets have been made by Southwestern women for 8,000 years.
- Many Tohono O'odham Basket designs are produced in full-scale and miniature.

Introduction

Today, we have such a variety of pots and pans and other containers that it is amazing to realize that in the past, baskets served all of the food preparation and storage needs of some people. Baskets were the earliest handmade containers, and in the Southwest every basket was decorated. Today Tohono O'odham (Papago) women make more baskets than any other group in the Southwest. The Tohono O'odham are closely related to the Akimel O'odham (Pima) people, living just to the south of the Akimel O'odham (Pima) in Arizona. The two groups share many designs, which makes it difficult to distinguish their baskets from one another.

Basket Forms

Tohono O'odham Baskets represent the greatest variety of basket forms in the Southwest today. A favorite design includes human figures, seen on this covered basket, as well as an array of different animals. Many of the baskets made in full size are also produced in miniature size. This miniature basket measures only about three inches across.

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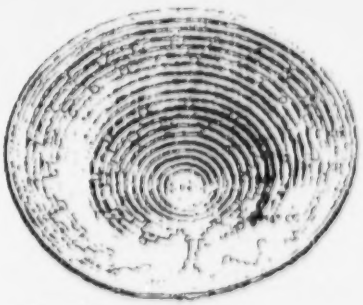
Diné Wedding Basket



Diné (Navajo)
Southwestern region (United States)
Basket, 20th century
Plant fiber
Gift of Mrs. C. C. Bovey 42.18.140

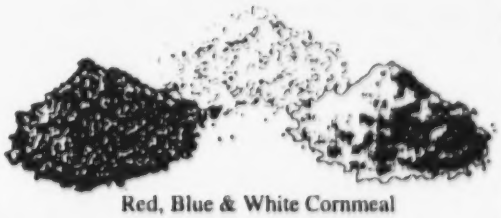
KEY IDEAS

- This basket was made to be used in a Diné (Navajo) wedding ceremony.
- The circular design of the basked relates to the Diné story of creation.

Introduction

This basket was used in a traditional Diné (Navajo) wedding ceremony. In the Diné (Navajo) creation story the first people emerged from the center of the earth. The circular design on the basket emphasizes the center, which represents that place. The black triangles probably symbolize mountains, and the red areas are rays of the sun.

Navajo tribal web site: http://www.navajo.org/



Red, Blue & White Cornmeal

Wedding Ceremony

Before a Diné (Navajo) woman marries she prepares cornmeal of three colors: red for health, blue for happiness and white for wealth. During the Diné wedding ceremony a basket like this one is covered with the cornmeal and placed between the couple. The father of the bride draws a line with corn pollen, a symbol of fertility, across the colored cornmeal to indicate the four directions and draws a circle around the edge. The bride and groom eat from the four directions and the center of the basket, and the rest of the cornmeal is shared with the wedding guests. The last guest to eat from the basket receives it as a gift!

Navajo tribal web site: http://www.navajo.org/

Diné Hogans

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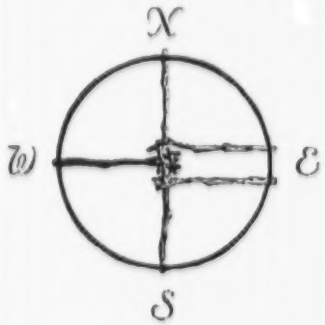
A Navajo hogan in Arizona



Imagine that you are looking down on a hogan with its roof removed. The hogan is a circle divided into four sections by the supporting poles. The doorway (framed by double poles) faces to the east to welcome the morning sun. If you look closely at the inner design of this basket, you see a break or pathway in the pattern. That pathway corresponds to the doorway of the hogan. The coiling on the basket ends at the pathway so it can be felt in the dark, allowing the basket to be turned to the east even if the pattern cannot be seen.

Navajo tribal web site: http://www.navajo.org/

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